

REMARKS

The telephone election of Group I, claims 1-8 is affirmed.

In paragraph 8 of the Office Action, claims 1-8 were rejected under 35U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kubo et al. (Kubo).

Reconsideration is requested.

The present invention relates to tablet punches having a non-stick polymeric layer applied to the cup (claim 1) or the punch tip (claim 5). The tablet punches according to the invention minimize or eliminate tablet manufacturing problems that result from sticking and capping and allow for the reduction or elimination of the need for table lubricant additives.

Claim 1 has been amended to point out that the tablet press is for preparing pharmaceutical tablets and to recite the dimensions of canceled claim 4. New claim 20 recites that the tablet punch is adapted for use in a pharmaceutical tablet press where said tablet punch comprising an opposing pair of non-stick tablet punches. Support for these amendments and newly added subject matter is found in the specification at page 9, lines 12-22.

The non-stick polymeric layer may be any non-stick polymer and preferably is a fluoropolymer such as polytetrafluoroethylene.

The Kubo patent discloses tablets for encapsulating electronic components and a method for encapsulating electronic components. Nothing in Kubo suggests a method or apparatus for molding pharmaceutical tablets.

The release agent used by Kubo is sprayed on the punch surface as a solution. The spray-coating is applied periodically during the tableting operation which means that a portion of the spray-coated material ends up as a part of the tablet. This is not a problem when electronic coated articles are made but it is a consideration when pharmaceutical tablets are ingested because of the ingestion of the spray coated material which would lead a skilled artisan to reject the Kubo teachings regarding the use of a spray coating in the making of a pharmaceutical tablet.

Nothing in Kubo suggest the use of a layer that measures 0.01µm - 10mm to the

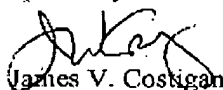
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punch cup as recited in amended claim 1 or the layer of the coating of 0.1mm to 5mm applied to the tip as recited in claim 8. For these reasons, the cited prior art fails to anticipate or make obvious the amended and newly presented claims of the present application and it is requested that this ground of rejection be withdrawn.

An early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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